

40987 and 40988—Continued.

half an inch in diameter, are borne in broad, flat-topped corymbs sometimes a foot across. The oblong-obovate fruits are half an inch in length and pearly white when ripe, inclosing a single large seed. It is apparently a good melliferous plant and of considerable ornamental value. For trial in southern Florida and southern California." (*Popenoe*.)

40989. SACCHARUM CILIARE Anderss. Poaceæ. Elephant grass.

From St. Kitts, British West Indies. Presented by Mr. F. R. Shepherd, curator, Botanic Station. Received July 22, 1915.

"It is the *sara* of the classic authors of India and is met with throughout the plains and lower hills and distributed to China. In the Punjab it often covers large tracts of country and is frequently planted in lines or dividing hedges, especially in low-lying localities subject to periodic inundation. Sir William Jones says: 'This beautiful and superb grass is highly celebrated in the Puranas, the Indian god of war having been born in a grove of it, which burst into flame; the gods gave notice of his birth to the nymph of the Pleiads, who descended and suckled the child; thence named Carticeya. The *casá* (*kásá* or *káns*) vulgarly *casia* (*S. spontaneum*) has a shorter culm, leaves much narrower, longer and thicker hairs, but a smaller panicle, less compounded, without the purplish tints of the *sara*; it is often described with praise by the Hindu poets for the whiteness of its blossoms, which give a large plain, at some distance, the appearance of a broad river. Both plants are extremely useful to the Indians, who harden the internodal parts of the culms and cut them into implements for writing on their polished paper. From the *munj*, or culm, of the *sara* was made the *maunji*, or holy thread, ordained by Menu to form the sacerdotal girdle, in preference even to the *cusa* grass.' *Munj* fiber is obtained from the leaf sheaths; the blades are the *sar* or *sara* used in thatching houses and as a paper material; the contained flowering stem is the *bind* or *vind*; the panicle or flowering stem is the *sirki*, *tíl*, or *thili*, used in thatching boats, carts, etc.; *sentha* or *kana* is the lower, stronger portions of the flowering stem, used in the manufacture of chairs, stools, tables, baskets, and screens; and *tílak*, *tilon*, or *ghua* are names that denote the flowers. Some of these names, such as *munj* and *sara*, have been supposed to denote the products of different species, instead of different parts of one and the same plant; hence has originated much of the confusion that prevails. *Sara* is used in paper making and *munj* as a textile fiber. The much-prized *munj* is strong, elastic, and has a wonderful power of enduring moisture without decaying. It is extensively employed in the manufacture of cordage, ropes, the famed Delhi mats, and in the preparation of baskets, etc. *Munj* mats are reported to be proof against white ants, but are hard on shoe leather, harsh to the foot, and fatiguing when walked on for any length of time. These are largely produced in Allahabad, Agra, Delhi, and are traded in all over India, and within recent years have begun to find their way to Europe. In the early spring the old grass is often fired, when shortly after a crop of young leaves is produced from the stools, which is much valued as fodder." (*Watt, Commercial Products of India*, p. 929-930.)

40990. PASSIFLORA EDULIS Sims. Passifloraceæ. Passion fruit.

From Garrawin, Mangrove Mountain, via Gosford, Sydney, Australia. Presented by Mr. J. Harrison. Received July 28, 1915.

"Seeds of our commercial variety of *P. edulis*, of which we in this district are the principal growers." (*Harrison*.)